

And of course the seamless narrative of feminist history is partly the product of memory itself, and the very human urge to encapsulate experience in an ever more nostalgic way. This being the case, we must find positive, progressive ways to use our imperfect but inevitable impulse to abridge memory. As Friedrich Jameson explains, “there is no reason why a nostalgia conscious of itself, a lucid and remorseless dissatisfaction with the present on the grounds of some remembered plenitude, cannot furnish as adequate a revolutionary stimulus as any other.”<sup>7</sup> In addition, we must recognize and support the courageous feminists who participated in the groundswell of the '60s and '70s who have gone out of their way to acknowledge that those moments felt messy and chaotic at the time, not like a “movement” at all. It is to these feminists that we owe a great debt, for their reinvestment of the first wave with some of the critical detail removed by distance.

And that is the imperative that our invisibility brings; we must find ways to transmit our movement forward by using all our existing advantages while creating new ones for ourselves as well. We must develop techniques to incorporate a more diverse set of voices and methodologies to help bear the weight of our movement in its forward vector. We must describe and preserve our movement in a way that does not retroactively erase difference, but instead makes it visible for all to see. We have been told that feminism cannot afford this diversity, that differences dilute our message and make us weaker. We have been told that we must move forward in a singu-

lar direction, in a unified manner, for our movement to be seen. These voices tell us, again, that the path to equality is finite, narrow, and fixed. These voices sound eerily familiar; let's not let them be our own.

<sup>1</sup> Rosalyn Duetsche, *Not-Forgetting: Mary Kelly's Love Songs*, Grey Room 24 (2006): 27-37.

<sup>2</sup> Connie Butler, invited speaker, “The Feminist Future: Theory and Practice in Visual Arts,” 34 min., 32 sec., sound recording; from Museum of Modern Art MultiMedia, MP3, <http://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/audios/76/157> (accessed on May 25, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Martha Rosler, invited speaker, “The Feminist Future: Theory and Practice in Visual Arts,” 35 min., 27 sec., sound recording; from Museum of Modern Art MultiMedia, MP3, <http://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/audios/76/157> (accessed on May 25, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Richard Meyer, invited speaker, “The Feminist Future: Theory and Practice in Visual Arts,” 28 in., 10 sec., sound recording; from Museum of Modern Art MultiMedia, MP3, <http://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/audios/76/157> (accessed on May 25, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Sharon Hayes, invited panelist, “Reconsidering Feminism: A Year in Review,” 2 hours, 2 min., 4 sec., sound recording; from MoMA Think Lectures, MP3, [feed://www.moma.org/visit/podcasts/feed\\_thinkmodern.xml](http://www.moma.org/visit/podcasts/feed_thinkmodern.xml) (accessed on May 10, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous participant, “Back to the Future: An Experimental Conversation on Contemporary Feminism,” Whitney Museum of American Art, February 21, 2009; transcript from [www.contemporaryfeminism.com](http://www.contemporaryfeminism.com) (accessed on August 28, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Friedrich Jameson, *Marxism and Form*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947): 82.

Pages 18-21: Liz Linden, *Unmonumental (for Alphabet Prime)*, 2009

## Ginny Kollak

### *True Lies, Tired Hedonists*

*Don't coop yourself up all day in the library. It is a perfectly lovely afternoon. The air is exquisite. There is a mist upon the woods, like the purple bloom upon a plum. Let us go and lie on the grass and smoke cigarettes and enjoy Nature.*

The first lines of Oscar Wilde's *The Decay of Lying* break my heart. It's all Simon Goldin and Jakob Senneby's fault, and though it is indeed a perfectly lovely afternoon, the purple bloom upon the plum I had with breakfast will have to do for now.

Goldin+Senneby, as the two Stockholm-based artists call themselves, have found a way to rope me into their web of production. True, I may have entangled myself, telling them that I had been reading some Wilde and saw a few connecting threads between his text and *Headless*, their own ongoing project. And I did say that I thought I might write something about it. However it started, I'm now in the library, commissioned to write an article at the behest of the artists, who were invited to contribute to a new journal of contemporary art.

Let's start with the most superficial of similar circumstances: Oscar Wilde's Vivian has been writing an article, too. *The Decay of Lying*, from 1891, takes the form of a dialogue between two invented characters: the rather flamboyant writer Vivian and the more malleable Cyril, who is alternately scandalized and amused by his friend's acrobatic criticism. Vivian presents his splashy theory to Cyril and the reader in the draft of an article, also called “The Decay of Lying,” written for the charmingly named *Retrospective Review*, journalistic arm of the society of Tired Hedonists (of which Vivian is a proud member). Under this guise, Wilde develops his own ideas about the status of art and aesthetics in the Victorian era. Vivian's article—ostensibly a protest against the stifling trend of realism in art and literature—begins